

SUMMER 2023

THE ESC CONNECTION

A DIGITAL MAGAZINE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF NORTHEAST OHIO



Hats off to the
Class of 2023



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

By Dr. Bob Mengerink, *Superintendent*

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Now that we are finally reaching the summer months, I hope each and every one of you find some time for well-deserved rest and relaxation. That said, I know you will all be spending the summer thinking about what's next for your districts and your students. You and your teams will undoubtedly be spending hours planning, creating, learning and facilitating. Our summer work at the ESC will not be any different. It is during these months that we anticipate future needs of educators, accelerate our development of new services and strategically increase our capacity.

We have also witnessed a continued growth in the use of summer for professional development. More and more educators are using this time to increase their understanding of new requirements, learn new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning, and hopefully find some inspiration and encouragement for beginning another year of hard work. We will be hosting many institutes, workshops and conferences during the summer month, which can be found at our [online calendar of events](#).

Please know that our team is as accessible as ever during the summer months for questions, concerns and assistance. Knowing how much there is for you to accomplish during the limited summer months, we stand ready to help at any time.

Sincerely,

Bob

Cover photo: Chagrin Falls High School's Class of 2023, Photo
Credit: JP Zimmer, Chagrin Falls High School Student Photographer



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ESC CREATES OST DATA DASHBOARD: TO STRENGTHEN DISTRICT DATA CAPACITY

The purpose of the OST Data Dashboard is to support teachers in using state testing data to improve instruction. The ESC of Northeast Ohio offers standards-driven, actionable information using reports created from the item analysis data housed in the Centralized Reporting System (CRS). The OST Data Dashboard uses a dedicated data visualization platform, providing districts an entirely digital and flexible interface to analyze their state testing data.

A variety of data displays allow educators to customize how results are viewed. For all reports, educators can opt to view data at the district, school, or teacher level, and to view cumulative, multiple, or one test administration at a time. The list below describes the reports available:

- » **Subject Reports** allow for analysis of one subject at a time.
- » **Trend Reports** show patterns and trends over time for one subject area.

- » **Comparison Reports** provide a side-by-side view of related data, such as school-to-school/Top 5, and Districts-to-Top 5. The Top 5 data set pools data from the state-wide highest-ranked districts according to their overall Performance Index (PI) ratings.
- » **Writing Reports** provide a table view of students writing scores broken down by rubric component.

To strengthen internal capacity in utilizing the OST Data Dashboard, the ESC has resources available to support the work. One report available in the dashboard includes Ohio's Learning Standards and links to resources containing all released items. Discussion Protocols, another resource, are specific to the reports available in the dashboard and serve as a companion guide as teachers engage in the analysis, assisting teachers in identifying strengths, areas of focus, and ultimately creating action plans on how to use the data to improve instruction.



Mentor Public Schools Explicit Writing Instruction

Consisting of more than 20 principals, academic coaches and central office leaders, Mentor Public School district leaders kicked off their May meeting by focusing on explicit writing instruction. After curriculum specialist Larry Luciano took The Writing Revolution courses, he recognized the need to support district teachers as they make changes to the way they have been teaching writing. Mentor Public Schools has been making shifts according to the Governor's call to educators to align their literacy instruction to science of reading evidence-based practices. During the May session, participants calibrated the why behind explicit writing instruction and learned strategies for sentence level work, structures of teaching students to write well organized and elaborated paragraphs, scaffolds for composing multi-paragraph writing, and revision techniques. Here are guiding principles of the training:

- » Writing can and should be taught in all subjects, and when embedded in the content of the curriculum, writing instruction is a powerful teaching tool. Writing tasks that are rooted in subject content will advance students' thinking. Not only do explicit writing strategies reinforce the content and serve as a vehicle for thinking, these scaffolds also help teach students to write. When students write in the content, they are learning to write and writing to learn.
- » Students need explicit instruction in writing. We should not assume because a student

speaks well or reads well that it will translate easily to writing. Teacher modeling, gradual release, and practice with feedback can be embedded within the subjects.

- » Sentences are the building blocks of all writing. If students cannot write well organized sentences, they will never produce a decent essay, or even a decent paragraph. Often, educators feel pressure for students to compose multiple paragraph compositions when they have weak sentences and struggle grappling with grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation. Natalie Wexler says in her article in *Forbes Magazine* January 4, 2023, "To improve students' writing, teach them to construct sentences and outline paragraphs."

In response to the requests in the field, our ESC districts, such as Willoughby Eastlake, North Ridgeville, South Euclid Lyndhurst, CMSD, and Kirtland, are recognizing the need to support teachers with strategies for teaching explicit writing instruction. Teaching and Learning Consultant, Jamie Smith, will facilitate additional sessions on Explicit Writing Instruction in June and October.



The Science of Reading for School Psychologists

In March 2023, the ESC of Northeast Ohio offered a two-part series on the Science of Reading for School Psychologists, held in person at the ESC. Ohio Literacy Specialist Jackie Dietrich and Teaching and Learning Consultant Christy Roshong partnered to design the series specific to the role of school psychologists based on requests and feedback from the ESCNEO School Psychologist Network participants.

During the series, learners focused on understanding the sequence of how literacy skills develop and how these skills are best assessed to inform instruction and intervention. Participants reflected on how this knowledge applies to their role in supporting MTSS implementation, conducting assessments, and case-managing evaluations.

Over 40 participants joined each session, which included school psychologists from 26 districts across six counties! Many districts sent multiple school psychologists, which allowed for collaboration and discussion within and across districts, schools, and multiple grade levels.



We received resounding feedback to offer this series again, as participants found the content and resources helpful and immediately relevant to their roles. We are excited to offer this series again on August 18 and September 18, 2023 at the ESC from

8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Register on our website at our Calendar of Events.

If you have any questions related to this topic, or if you would like training or consultation for your school psychologists specific to your district, please contact Jackie or Christy for more information at jackie.dietrich@escneo.org or christy.roshong@escneo.org.

Teaching and Learning with Technology

The ESC of Northeast Ohio offered a workshop series on Teaching & Learning with Technology during the 2022-2023 academic year. Vicki Turner, Director of Information Technology with the Berea City Schools, introduced participants to the T3 Framework created by Sonny Magana that promotes deep learning of technology through Translational, Transformative, and Transcendent phases of teaching and learning through deepening integration of technology in the classroom. Educators explored Translational learning with Sphero and other technologies that have ease of use to make users familiar and comfortable with technology. Transformative learning was demonstrated through MakeyMakey and circuits providing experience with coding and robotic movement. Educators experienced Transcendent learning with technology at the Kent State University Design Innovation Hub where they learned about design and complex technologies that provide human and technical interaction for good in the world.

Teachers engaged in constructing a prosthetic hand whose parts had been 3D printed for the benefit of an individual living in India or Central America who had lost a hand and needs a prosthesis in order to have a better life. The Hands of Gratitude project was developed by Matt Campana, who developed the concept as a corporate team building opportunity using the 3D printing technology, but with a social impact purpose. Teachers participating in the Hands of Gratitude component of the workshop commented on the social-emotional impact of the process that illustrates the Transcendent element of the T3 Framework that can have great impact on adults or students in the classroom utilizing technology for a greater good.

The ESC will offer a technology and education workshop on Using AI in Your Classroom on November 3, 2023. Check the ESC Calendar of Events to register.

ESC Business Advisory Council

The ESC of Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council has received a 2023 Three-Star Award from Lt. Governor Husted's office for exceptional work building strong partnerships to instill professional skills for future careers and coordinating experiences for students.



On April 28, the BAC hosted speaker Margaret Trimer, Vice President of Strategic Partnerships for Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, where she guides marketing, public relations, company culture and Delta Dental's investment of more than \$7M dedicated to building healthy, smart, vibrant communities. Ms. Trimer discussed the current career scenario of dental health in the U.S. revealing that 63 million people live in "dental deserts," twice as many as in 2000. The business of dentistry includes mostly small business owners who are entrepreneurs. Dentists use the latest technologies, apps, 3D printing and AI. Careers include dentists and dental specialists and technicians, hygienists, and dental therapists. Dental hygienist jobs are the #2 health care support career, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

The ESC is offering its second Summer Camp for High School Students focusing on Traditional and Advanced Manufacturing, one of the in-demand job sectors in Northeast Ohio. Summer Camp dates are June 21 and 22, 2023. Students will interact with manufacturing business leaders and visit manufacturing companies that are leaders in our region.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: DIPLOMACY SIMULATION

On May 16, the ESC of Northeast Ohio and the Cleveland Council on World Affairs (CCWA) provided a new experiential learning opportunity for educators, a Diplomacy Simulation. Middle and high school educators from Bay Village, Chardon, Cleveland, Cleveland Heights-University Heights, Hudson, Mayfield, and Olmsted Falls City Schools participated as representatives of countries attempting to resolve border and water conflicts that threatened resources and peace in their countries as they appealed to the United Nations for assistance in resolving their conflicts.

Teachers experienced the exercise as their students would in class settings. The task introduced participants to issues of national sovereignty, economics, industry, military conflict, protection of borders and natural resources, and alignment with other countries, as well as negotiation skills as participants worked in teams representing their imaginary country and presenting their ideas. During the debriefing,

educators commented about applications to literacy, communication skills, such as respectful debate and dialogue during oral argument, as well as gaining skills in map reading and understanding of the difficulties of diplomatic engagement. Participants indicated that such scenarios and simulations could provide an opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively across disciplines preparing students to engage in the Diplomacy Simulation through deeper understanding of geographic regions of the world, science and technology, economics. Industry and how to collaborate effectively, as well as learning about possible careers as diplomats.



STUDENT WELLNESS DEPARTMENT

During the 2022-2023 school year, the Student Wellness Department (SWD) worked collaboratively to strengthen relationships across systems to enhance the health, well-being, and safety of students. The SWD organized fifty-two professional development events or webinars related to the implementation of evidence-based practices or multi-tiered frameworks during the 2022-2023 school year. The events highlighted the following topics: Chronic Absenteeism, Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG), Cultivating Connection, Crisis Prevention, Ethics for mental health professionals, Homeless Awareness, MTSS/PBIS, Family and Community Engagement, and Student Mobility. These events and/or webinars reached 1,829 attendees representing over 80 school districts/organizations and various community partners.

The SWD, in partnership with MetroHealth and the ESC of NEO Professional Development department, hosted a two-day Mental Health Awareness Symposium on May 1, 2023 and May 2, 2023. The event featured a variety of speakers and topics exploring aspects of student mental health with an emphasis on enhancing resilience in students and families. Topic areas included:

- » Building Stronger Kids, Families and Communities
- » Navigating the Intersection of Autism and Mental Health

- » Supporting LGBTQ+ Students in Schools
- » Understanding Eating Disorders in Children and Adolescents
- » Innovative Practices in Mental Health Prevention
- » Using Data to Inform Systems and Interventions
- » PBIS and MTSS: An Interconnected Systems Framework to Address Student Mental Health
- » Authentic Family and Community Engagement

Lastly, on May 17, 2023, the SWD, in partnership with ODE, presented a virtual overview of HB123 to support districts in implementing evidence-based instruction. The session kicked off with ODE sharing an overview of HB123 Suicide, Violence Prevention and Social Inclusion requirements, followed by four school districts outlining their implementation plan. Additionally, ODE shared an update on SB288, Erin's law. The session was recorded and is available for viewing. A legislative guide is available through the SWD website to help support school districts in staying informed on current and pending Senate and/or House bills.

For more information contact
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student WELLNESS

A bi-monthly e-newsletter from the ESC of Northeast Ohio Student Wellness Department

Project Prevent Grant Funded by the United States Department of Education



[Sign up to receive our Student Wellness Department E-Newsletter.](#)



[For archived issues, click here.](#)

2023 EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

Recognizing students, peers & educators

On May 12, over 130 students, family members and educators from Cuyahoga County gathered for the Excellence in Education Awards recognizing students with special needs, peers and educators. State Support Team 3 in partnership with the ESC of Northeast Ohio organizes this annual event which was held at Corporate College East in Warrensville Heights.

"It has been a few years since we have been able to celebrate this wonderful occasion together in person. I have missed this event, which is by far my favorite event each year. While we've been apart, I have reflected a lot about perseverance throughout all the challenges we have faced over these last few years. Those of you that we are honoring this year truly embody the meaning of perseverance. This perseverance seen in those we honor today comes from their deeply held belief that they can do and be anything they can dream. I want to encourage all of you to keep on dreaming, keep on believing and keep on going. Do not stop. Use your gifts to make the world a better place. And most importantly, don't forget that we believe in you, too," said ESC Superintendent Dr. Bob Mengerink in his opening remarks.

Three types of awards were presented during this event:

- **Outstanding Student Achievement Award** acknowledging achievements of school-age students with special needs.
- **Outstanding Peer Achievement Award** recognizing students who have established positive relationships and who have assisted

students with special needs, serving as exemplary role models.

- **Outstanding Educator Achievement Award** honoring educators who are the exemplars in designing instructional strategies and programs.

Awards were presented to 11 students, 7 peers and 12 educators. The full list of recipients can be found on the SST3 website. In addition, two regional awards were presented:



The 2023 R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award recipient is Hunter Tate from Lakewood High School in the Lakewood City School District. This award is presented to one exemplary student with a disability from each of Ohio's 16 State Support Team regions. Established by the Ohio Department of Education in honor of the late Dr. Raymond A. Horn, Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction, this award recognizes students' outstanding achievements.



The 2023 Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Educator Award recipient is Jeffrey Porter from the Delisle Options Center- Heights Career Consortium in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

This award is given to an outstanding educator or team from each of the 16 State Support Teams in Ohio. Awarded to recipients who have made extraordinary contributions to the education of students with disabilities. This award is given in honor of the late Franklin B Walter, Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1977 until 1991, a post held longer than any other state superintendent in Ohio's history.

These two recipients will be recognized by the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Exceptional

Children and the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities on June 7, 2023, at a virtual awards presentation.

This year's keynote speakers were Grace Blatt and Breanna Sprenger who are Good Life Ambassadors (GLA). The GLA program was established through the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities in 2016

to educate community organizations on increasing their capacity to be inclusive and inviting to people with disabilities.



Congratulations to all of this year's award recipients! (Continued on page 14)

2023 EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

Albert Einstein Academy

Makaya Palumbo - Student Award
Jennifer Dillon - Educator Award

Bay Village City Schools

Jennifer Kasunick - Student Award
Bay Village Middle School

Beachwood City Schools

Dalya Berezovsky - Student Award
Beachwood High School

Meg Miller - Educator Award
Beachwood Middle School

Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools

Jeffrey Porter - Educator Award
Delisle Options Center - Heights Career Center

Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools

William Watts - Student Award
Cuyahoga Heights Middle School

Vaya Pumphrey - Peer Award
Cuyahoga Heights Middle School

Kelly Cummins - Educator Award

East Cleveland City Schools

Lawrence Maxwell - Student Award
Shaw High School

Euclid City Schools

Tavia Carter - Student Award
Bluestone Elementary

Tina Schneider - Educator Award
Euclid High School

Amare Meier - Peer Award
Chardon Hills STEM Elementary

Lakewood City Schools

Hunter Tate - Student Award
Lakewood High School

Melissa Simonetta - Educator Award
Lakewood High School

Reese Fishbaugh - Peer Award
Lakewood High School

Maple Heights City Schools

Kaidyn Jackson - Student Award
JFK Elementary

Nina Carvelli - Educator Award
Barack Obama Elementary

Mayfield City Schools

Sarah Keso - Educator Award
CEVEC

North Olmsted City Schools

Olivia Kezdi - Student Award
North Olmsted Middle School

Christine Perog - Educator Award
Chestnut Elementary

Northwest School of the Arts

Katherine Spies - Educator Award

Olmsted Falls City Schools

Beckham Bergen - Student Award
Olmsted Falls Middle School

Angie Stokes - Educator Award
Falls-Lenox Elementary

Addie Odon - Peer Award
Olmsted Falls High School

Parma City Schools

David Antoshchuk - Student Award and Peer Award
Shiloh Middle School

Strongsville City Schools

Emma Northeim - Educator Award
Muraski Elementary School

Chloe Hamad - Peer Award
Madeline Petras - Peer Award
Strongsville Middle School



The Ohio Online Learning Program has been instrumental in serving 23 districts and over 300 K-12 students this year. Our program stands as an exceptional avenue for personalized learning, flexibility, the development of digital skills, improved self-discipline, and prioritizing the safety and well-being of students. Supported by our dedicated team of Student Learning Advocates, we are committed to providing motivation, cultivating time management skills, and offering comprehensive guidance and resources to our students.

The Ohio Online Learning Program actively seeks to enhance student learning by presenting a multitude of options and opportunities for school districts. Through strategic partnerships with leading online learning providers such as Imagine Learning, Edmentum, Pearson, Lincoln Learning Solutions, and Virtual Learning Academy, we have significantly expanded the range of course offerings available to our students during the 2023-2024 school year.

Furthermore, we are delighted to announce that we are now entering our third year of partnership with the esteemed University of Cincinnati to deliver the Early IT Program. This exceptional initiative allows students in grades 9-12 to engage in college-level introductory IT courses. Completion of the program enables students to successfully accomplish their first year of college education and secure automatic admission to the University

of Cincinnati. The program has already demonstrated exceptional success, with a notable group of Copley-Fairlawn students having completed three IT courses and one senior receiving admission to the University of Cincinnati. Register your students for the Fall cohort!

Recognizing the significance of supporting teachers in creating an engaging and meaningful classroom experience, we have forged a partnership with Newsela. As part of our collaboration, districts partnering with the Ohio Online Learning Program can avail themselves of discounted pricing, comprehensive training, and professional development opportunities tailored to teachers' needs.

The Ohio Online Learning Program remains committed to fostering a superior educational environment and promoting academic excellence for K-12 students, supported by a network of esteemed partners and dedicated professionals.

For information, contact
Kajal Brazwell, Ohio Online Coordinator
kajal.brazwell@escneo.org

2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR HUMANITARIAN AWARD RECIPIENTS

The ESC of Northeast Ohio named several students as recipients of their annual Humanitarian Awards. Recipients were nominated by administrators in their schools for showing leadership and community service as well as possessing great character during the 2022-23 school year. One student from each middle and high school in the communities of Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, and Richmond Heights Local Schools received scholarships and awards. In addition to a cash award, students receive a personalized plaque, starfish pin, and starfish bookmark. The starfish is the symbol of a story of the impact one person can make in a community.



Cuyahoga Heights
Middle School

Sean Strahan, 8th grade

Sean Strahan is an unassuming young person who strives to do his best in the classroom. He is an

authentic, kind, and dependable young man. Sean is thoughtful and funny while chatting with his peers and is a positive partner while working on a group project. Easy going and humble, he is receptive when receiving feedback. Sean is a coachable young person who “shows up” for practice, as well as football games, wrestling matches, and track.



Cuyahoga Heights
High School

Bella Williams, Senior

It may be cliché to refer to someone as a ray of sunshine, but that description is the first thing that

comes to mind when anyone thinks of Bella Williams. She is a positive person who lifts up those around her. Bella goes out of her way to show kindness. Her smile is contagious, and she is always the first person to walk into her teacher's classroom and ask how they are doing. Even her hobbies center around her love of seeing other people happy. She loves to bake, and it seems the part she enjoys most about experimenting with and perfecting different recipes is sharing the finished product with other people. She's always willing to lend a helping hand to a peer or a teacher.



**Independence
Middle School**

**Brayden Palus,
8th grade**

Brayden Palus works diligently in his academic classes. He is involved in Sandwich Saturdays

at church, Where Everyone Belongs (WEB), wrestling, and basketball. He is kind, compassionate, friendly, caring to everyone, students and teachers alike, and always has a smile on his face. Teachers and students can count on him to be respectful, loyal, and helpful. His conscientious and empathetic nature makes him wise beyond his years. He shows tremendous strength and courage in and out of the classroom.

ESC Board Member George Klepacz presented the award.



**Independence
High School**

**Drew Straub,
Senior**

Very few, if any, students have embodied the term “humanitarian” like Drew Straub has while

a student at Independence High School. Random acts of kindness are a daily event for Drew. He also has organized and planned some very deliberate acts of kindness that have improved our school culture and climate. A founding member of our school’s Genders & Sexualities Alliance (GSA), Drew presented, with a fellow student, to our faculty regarding the issues and difficulties facing today’s LGBTQ+ students. He is also the organizer of our “Out of Darkness Walk” to raise awareness for suicide prevention.

ESC Board Member Carol Fortlage presented the award.



**Richmond Heights
Secondary School**

**Drew McSears,
8th grade**

Drew McSears has shown outstanding leadership as Student Council president. He has organized the staff

cookies bake-off and bake sales, led the concession stands, is a leader of the track team, participates in community service events, and assists with Jr. Prom and the sports banquet. He is a leader but never one to seek the spotlight; instead, he prefers to stand back and help others excel. Drew excelled academically throughout the year, making the honor roll every quarter. He took three high school courses: Honors Algebra, English 9, and Spanish. Drew is endlessly patient, kind, and encouraging, unknowingly serving as a quiet role model for all of our students.

ESC Board Vice President Anthony Miceli presented both awards.



**Richmond Heights
Secondary School**

**Kaleb McSears,
Senior**

Kaleb McSears is an active member of the National Honors Society, National Technical Honors

Society, president of the senior class, graduate of the MAGNET Early College/Early Career Program and is in the top 10 of his class. He is determined, innovative, and willing to accept any challenge. Kaleb is a model student by enrolling in College Credit Plus at Tri-C where he is securing an associate’s degree, taking AP & Honors courses at Richmond Heights High School, and completing the Auto Tech program through Excel Tecc Consortium. Kaleb is an intern at Parker Hannifin where he learned that hard work can lead to good things.



Parents of preschool age children with elevated blood lead levels do not have to face the challenge alone. Bright Beginnings' Parent Support Lead Program (PSLP) empowers parents of children ages three to five in Cuyahoga County with tools needed to mitigate the impact of lead exposure.

PSLP offers families dealing with lead exposure the education, cleaning supplies, nutrition aids, developmental screenings, school preparedness information, and connections to community resources and services to tackle their lead challenges. The program addresses the specific concerns of parents with personalized service plans that focus on supporting the families' understanding of the developmental impact of lead. Children under age three can receive the same lead exposure support services from Bright Beginnings' Early Intervention Program.

"Because of rapid growth and brain development occurring in early childhood, children under the age of six are the most vulnerable to the detrimental impacts of lead on the body," says Maggie VanDyne, Parent Support supervisor at Bright Beginnings. "While there may be a feeling that 'lead poisoning' is a problem of the past, it remains a reality for many Cuyahoga families."

Children in Cuyahoga County are exposed to lead at twice the rate of the national average. A 2019 Case Western Reserve University study found 25 percent of kindergarteners in Cleveland

Cuyahoga Parents Can Get Ahead of Lead with New Supports

public schools had elevated lead exposure. Exposure to lead may result in lifelong impacts on an individual's health, behavioral functioning, and learning abilities.



Specific PSLP service offerings may include special efforts around nutritional changes to mitigate the absorption of lead into a child's blood stream; aiding families in maintaining lead safe spaces in their homes; providing families with developmental activities for children; and helping with access to early education.

Those concerned about potential lead exposure can access support through the program's webpage where they can refer themselves or someone they know. PSLP is a part of Bright Beginnings' ever-growing Parent Support Department. Bright Beginnings continues to support families of young children through Early Intervention services in Cuyahoga County, and provides connections to the Help Me Grow system of supports and community resources throughout Ohio.

PSLP webpage: <https://www.escneo.org/ParentSupportLeadProgram>

Bright Beginnings website: www.brightbeginningskids.org

CAPSTONE ACADEMY

For information, contact:

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This spring, Capstone Academy created a virtual ceremony to celebrate our 2023 graduates. Through a series of video segments, we recreated the format of how our in-person graduation would be structured. Following “Pomp and Circumstance,” each of our five graduates were introduced virtually. A photo slideshow for each student was accompanied by a special song. Pictures highlighted students’ lives from their early years through adulthood. Commencement speakers made videos, sharing a special story or memory of each student. The Capstone Academy Program Administrator reflected on the graduates’ accomplishments over the years, and the Hattie Larlham Life Enrichment Manager gave a heartfelt speech welcoming the students into the next phase

of their lives. Before the graduates were released, videos of the students having their tassels turned were shared. We wish the 2023 graduating class the best as they enter adult services!

Our Extended School Year (ESY) programming started in early June and will continue through July. Students will be receiving Occupational, Physical, and Speech therapy services as per their Individual Education Program (IEP). Students may work directly with an Intervention Specialist on specific ESY goals. Some of the activities planned are sink/float and gravity experiments, as well as making predictions and answering questions. The 2023-2024 school year will begin on August 18.

PASSPORT School Program

Guiding Extraordinary Individuals Toward a Future of Hope

For information, contact:

Lisa Adler, Director

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440-688-1280

Spring activities were evident around the school. Bumble bees and flowers made by the students decorate the hallways. After reading about St. Patrick's Day traditions, students participated in many learning activities and a festive luncheon in the home skills room. Cody and Rob cooked Colcannon— potatoes, cabbage and corned beef. Lucky Charms cereal was used to complete numerous math activities of sorting, tallying most to least, completing a bar graph and of course, taste testing.



Connor & Austyn classify shapes and colors of Lucky Charms and place them on the sorting mat.



Retta, PTA, and Rayvon work on upright seating and upward body strength while visually attending to a story on the iPad.



Mary and Connor enjoy riding the double bike while listening to music during gross motor gym time.



Aniya prefers to eat a Lucky Charm, then place one on the sorting board.



Micaiah takes a break on her favorite chair



The new adaptive playground and covered gazebo will be amazing. Students have been watching the progress on the construction and waiting for it to be completed.



Dae'Shon and Pete, faithful volunteer, play pendulum bowling in the gym.



Slavica, SLP, uses various Big Mac switches to elicit sounds, greetings and character's names from a spring story. Connor makes the blue truck go "Beep"

Spotlight on the 2023 Graduate — Mark Myles

Mark is a Warrensville Heights City Schools' student. He was an elementary school student, six years old, when he came to Passport School in August 2009. He especially enjoys going on field trips and all school events where he loves to interact and socialize with classmates and staff. He uses a communication device to deliver mail throughout Metzenbaum during his building job time. Mark has been interacting and caring for the plants throughout the building. During horticulture club, he helps in the outdoor covered green house. Graduation was held in the school gym on June 2. Warrensville Heights City Schools will be presenting Mark his diploma. Mark will transition to adult services after graduation.





Cleveland Metropolitan School District Has a New CEO

CMSD News Bureau

The Track & Field relay race metaphor has rarely been more visually appropriate than it was on Tuesday morning at Garrett Morgan High School Campus.

Standing before a podium in the school's Media Center, outgoing CMSD CEO Eric S. Gordon reached into a bag to retrieve a racing baton and then called incoming CEO Dr. Warren G. Morgan to the podium.

It was time for the symbolic exchange in leadership. Mr. Gordon first referenced the relay exchange in his State of the Schools address in 2022. Now it was coming to fruition at a press conference attended by Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, CMSD Board Chair Anne Bingham and Vice Chair Robert Heard Sr., along with other City of Cleveland and CMSD executives.

CEO Gordon handed the baton to Dr. Morgan and then the two leaders warmly embraced as the room erupted into applause. It was a simple gesture but



meaningful. CMSD's new leader had been publicly revealed.

His appointment as CEO represents a homecoming for Dr. Warren G. Morgan, who has recently served as Chief Academic Officer for Indianapolis Public Schools. But from 2014 to 2016, before he won a prestigious White House Fellowship with the U.S. Department of Education, Dr. Morgan worked at CMSD as a network leader of the Investment Phase 2 schools.

"It's good to be home," Dr. Warren told the assembled audience that was filled with education leaders, some of whom he worked with during his early stint at CMSD.

"I am extremely humbled, honored, but above all, just extremely grateful," the new CEO said. After reiterating a pledge that he publicly made to students and parents to spend his first 100 days on the job listening and learning, Dr. Morgan then

shared a private story that speaks volumes to his motivation to lead an urban education center like Cleveland.

At the end of his junior year in high school, Dr. Morgan's family home was destroyed in a fire. Everything was lost. He spent his senior year living out of a hotel with his family. He recalls the dire situation as being akin to homelessness. When he went off to school at Butler University, he struggled early on to find a sense of connection and belonging. There weren't many students of color and at least one professor expressed doubt in Morgan's ability to succeed.

But he found a way to persevere and to succeed. He has never looked back.

"There are some kids here in Cleveland that feel a sense of connection and belonging at school. But I know there are far too many kids, like I was, who are facing personal challenges at home and feel ostracized at school," said Morgan.

"If we do not provide a high-quality education and ensure that our students feel safe, seen, heard, and valued, we will lose them. I do this work for kids like me," the incoming CEO said as he wrapped up his first press conference introduction.

Dr. Morgan will start at CMSD in July.

For more information about Mr. Warren [click here](#).



(L-R) Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, Dr. Warren Morgan and Eric Gordon



Eric S. Gordon handing Dr. Warren Morgan a baton



Independence Primary School Students Visit Cleveland Clinic's Simulation Center

Twelve Independence Primary School fourth graders had an opportunity to visit the Cleveland Clinic Simulation and Advanced Skill Center in Cleveland on April 20. This is part of the school's year long "Fourth-Grade Student Immersion Project" initiative, where students are given an experience as if they are actually working in a particular field.

The first simulation demonstrated CPR. It was facilitated by a respiratory therapist and an instructor from the American Heart Association. The students learned about the use of a glidescope, ambu bag (manual resuscitator), and practiced compressions in a CPR demonstration. Next, they learned about personal protective equipment. This simulation was facilitated by a Cleveland Clinic perioperative nurse educator. Students learned how to put on gloves, gowns, hair bonnets, eye shields and masks and had a chance to wash their hands in a scrub sink. They were fascinated by the black light flashlight that made their germs glow.

Students also were introduced to a manikin. This demonstration was facilitated by simulation operations specialists from the Cleveland Clinic. Students practiced motor skills on the trainer to experience what current technology providers utilize.

Finally, they learned about art and simulation through moulage. Moulage is a unique technique that pairs artistry with medical accuracy so that



healthcare learners can have the highest level of realism when treating simulated patients. IPS students were able to participate in a hands-on activity of creating a wound.

Students enjoyed having lunch and then receiving a tour of the Cleveland Clinic building.

"Preparing for this visit has been a four month long process with partnerships between Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, Independence Local Schools, and the Cleveland Clinic education department," said Career Specialist Amanda Jaronowski, Independence Local Schools. "This was the first time the Clinic has hosted elementary students in its state-of-the-art simulation center, which is generally reserved for medical professionals employed by the Clinic."



Cuyahoga Heights Sixth Graders Can Learn Computer Science in 2023-24

Students entering sixth grade in the 2023-24 school year will have a new course to expand their knowledge in computer science and technology. “Computer Science for Innovators and Makers” was developed in partnership with Project Lead the Way (PLTW), a program that Cuyahoga Heights Schools have participated in for many years. PLTW provides teachers with training, support, and resources to inspire students in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

“The new class has allowed us to expand our program to include sixth grade so that all three grade levels in the middle school are now exposed to formal PLTW programming through this STEM experience,” said Assistant Superintendent Matt Young. The class is the final piece that allows the district to connect to STEM classes offered through Project Launch the Way, an offshoot of Project Lead the Way, that is offered at Cuyahoga Heights Elementary School as early as the second grade.

“We’re really excited because we know that STEM is so important in terms of what skills students will need in the future and this new sixth grade class also rounds out our Gateway to Technology at the middle school level,” remarked Young. It is likely that computer science will become a graduation requirement for Ohio students beginning with the Class of 2027. “This course will help the district begin the programming that will allow us to prepare for the new requirement before they reach high school,” he noted.

Young added that the new class will provide STEM opportunities for all sixth graders students regardless of their background, ability, or skill level. “Every student will have access to computer science skills as they begin at the middle school level,” he said.

The new course will allow students to discover computer science concepts and skills through meaningful applications. They will learn to creatively use sensors and actuators to develop systems that interact with their environment; to code and upload programs to microcontrollers that perform a variety of tasks; and to create projects such as wearable technology, interactive art, or mechanical devices. In the process, students will broaden their understanding of how computer science concepts can be applied to everyday life.

“This class teaches students coding that transfers from the virtual world to the physical world,” said computer science teacher Brooke Dragon who will teach the class. “Students will be given real-world problems, such as creating an alarm system for a treasure using their PLTW kits to build and code the alarm system. Not only will students learn new coding skills, but they will enhance their problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking skills.”

PPG Industries awarded the district a \$5,000 grant to help launch the new class. The funds were used to train Dragon to learn the PLTW curriculum and to purchase classroom equipment.

K Kirtland Elementary School Honors Students and Learning with Annual Celebration

Kirtland Elementary School (KES) hosted their 2nd annual Spring Celebration of Learning on Tuesday, May 9. Students and families were invited to explore the halls of KES and dive into their 2022-23 school year learning journey.

The Spring Celebration is a way to show Kirtland parents and families what their students have been working on first-hand. “It’s an all encompassing opportunity for the families to truly see what the students are engaged in both in the regular classrooms and in their specials classrooms,” said Kirtland Elementary School Principal Katy Nagaj.

All K-5 students and families spent time in the student’s home classrooms where the students themselves talk about the work they have done including sharing their digital portfolios and showing examples of projects they’ve completed.

Families also have the opportunity to learn more about what the students are doing in their Specials classes - art, gym, STEAM, and music. These Kirtland teachers prepared hands-on activities for students and families to participate together. “This provides firsthand knowledge to families so they are able to have a better understanding of what their children are doing while at school,” said Nagaj.

The Spring Celebration of Learning is also a showcase of student artwork from their entire school year. Each Kirtland artist has at least two projects on display throughout the school for the families to enjoy. The art is a wide variety of mediums as the students explored all different

types of art this year. KES Art Teacher Valerie Jacobucci planned an overarching pond for their ceramics unit, with each grade level contributing a different essential component. The third-grade students created fish, the second-grade students made water lilies and the fifth-grade students created dragonflies. Other projects from the school year include: fiber arts, watercolor projects, paper weaving, paintings, and metal embossing. Jacobucci also had art-related activities planned for the families that stopped by the art room.

A time honored tradition at Kirtland is the fifth-grade end of year musical which is now part of the Spring Celebration. There were 45 fifth-grade students who had spent the past four months practicing for the performance of the musical “S’cool”. “S’cool” is a musical about students struggling to fit-in at school and exploring the emotions and frustrations surrounding self-respect, and creating your identity. The students have been performing a version of this musical for over a decade. “It’s a rite of passage when you get to the fifth grade, you have the chance to be part of the play,” said STEAM Teacher and Play Director Bob Lasecki. The production was performed for both Kirtland Elementary School and Kirtland Middle School on May 8, before the parent showcase on May 9.

Lasecki’s STEAM fifth-grade students gave the families a robot demonstration as their contribution to the Celebration of Learning. During the school year, the students were charged with a real-world thinking prompt. The prompt/real world problem was that a nuclear reactor had melted down and

boxes needed retrieved from an area no longer safe for humans to go. They had to build robots capable of collecting the boxes and have them bring them back to a secure location in a specific amount of time. The students will attempt to complete the prompt in the coming weeks, but performed the

demonstration for families to show the robots they built and how they work.

The celebration continued on May 16 with the kindergarten and first grade spring concert.





Mentor Students Becoming College and Career Ready

For many teens, thinking about where they want life to lead doesn't happen until graduation is near. But juniors and seniors attending Mentor High School have the chance to jumpstart their futures in one of 24 Career Technical Education (CTE) programs offered through the district's Lake Shore Compact.

Serving Mentor, Euclid and Wickliffe school districts, the consortium was formed to help eliminate — the widening technical skills gap that exists throughout Ohio's workforce. The goal is to prepare pupils to enter a four-year college, two-year technical school or a career. Students apply to the CTE program as sophomores and begin taking classes at the start of their junior year. In 2024, courses will be expanded to include CTE electives for freshmen and sophomore students. Mentor High serves as the fiscal CTE lead for the three school districts.

"Career tech programs have been offered in our district for more than 30 years," says Dr. Joe

Glavan, director of the Lake Shore Compact. "But as the demand for skilled workers increases, we've seen a renewed emphasis on career education — specifically as it applies to providing students with industry recognized credentials and skill sets. We've expanded our program to meet the demands of local employers — as well as the students in our school district."

The interest continues to uptick: This year, more than 500 students applied for admission to a CTE program — including 44% of sophomores at Mentor High School. Currently, 36% of juniors and seniors are enrolled. "Those numbers are a new record for us," Glavan says. "Typically, school districts see a participation rate of 10% to 12%."

Additionally, 2022 graduates enrolled in CTE programs collectively had the opportunity to earn 3,622 college articulated credits

"Throughout high school, I didn't know what I wanted to do after graduation. While I had certain interests and hobbies, there wasn't anything that stood out to me as a future career," say Evie Megery, a Mentor High School senior who is participating in the school's CTE marketing and business administration (MBA) program. "I thought it would be a great way to try something new that would benefit me no matter what major I pursued."

The class focused on general business topics, the soft skills you should know when you are working at any professional business, while also providing students with the ability to focus on more specific areas, too, like marketing, logistics, account, etc.

"Thanks to the experience I had with the MBA program, I will now be attending Ohio Northern University in the fall to study writing and multimedia studies and creative writing."

Following commencement, Glavan and his team focus on post-program outcomes, staying in touch with graduates who completed a CTE program to find out how they're utilizing the skills they mastered in class. Statistics indicate that 87% of them enroll in a two- or four-year university, are offered employment in their field or enter the military. "There's this misconception that if you're in Career Tech, you're not college material," Glavan says. "But that's certainly not the case, when you consider that 58% of our program graduates go on to a two-year or four-year university." The director adds that since CTE programs have a graduation rate of 97.5%, students who opt to enter the job market immediately after high school will be fully prepared to seamlessly take the next step in the vocation for which they've been trained.

Lake Shore Compact CTE courses comprise a litany of subjects, including Allied Health, Advanced Manufacturing, Auto Service Technology, Mentor Fire EMT Academy (for senior students only), Construction Management, Culinary Arts, Early

Childhood Education, Fire Science/Emergency Medical Technician, Marketing and Business Administration, Programming and Software Development, Networking and IT Security, Urban Agriculture, Studio Art and Visual Design, Welding, Exercise Science, Career Based Intervention, Business Credentials, Videos, Teaching Professions, Advanced Manufacturing Pre- Apprenticeship (senior students only), Robotics/Automation and Cardinal Works.

"With the help of the MBA program, I have been an intern at The Rogers Co. since the beginning of August," Evie says, adding that she works there five days a week after school and interacts with the company's sales, marketing, logistics, show services and accounting teams. "By assisting a different department every day, I am not only gaining a variety of real-world experiences, I am also learning skills that will follow me through the rest of my career."

The Rogers Co., an award-winning designer and manufacturer of branded environments including showrooms and museums, and Classic Auto Group are longtime supporters that regularly employ CTE students. Glavan also points to the Allied Health program, in which students have the opportunity to earn their State Tested Nursing Assistant (STNA) credentials. The majority of those who do are offered internships in area hospitals while still in high school and are considering what the next step in their career ladder will be.

"It's humbling to see students in all of our programs be able to do what they've always wanted to be able to do," Glavan says. "Our goal at Mentor Schools is to continue the trajectory we started, which includes increasing the number of real world learning opportunities for students and ensure they'll have what it takes to succeed. No matter their course of study, we want every student to be college-prepared and career-ready."



Orange High School Earns FIRST Robotics State Championship

The Orange High School Flying Circuits Robotics team won the FIRST Robotics State Championship earlier this month. The top 24 teams in Ohio qualified for this championship event. The team advisors are proud of the resiliency and determination the students put on display during the entirety of the season.

The team consists of Kallin Ford, Sarah Friedlander, Griffin Ginosar, Niranjana Girish, Tyler Heasley, Gemma Klisovic, Giada Klisovic, Nikki Kolure (vice-president), Ben Lilly, Charlie Loebel, Halina Michener (president), Remy Perry, Nathan Rice (treasurer),



Michael Roberts, Charlie Rubsamen, Dominic Shotwell, Ben Wei, and Truman Williams (secretary). Simon Wieder serves as a mentor. Mr. Jon Rice and Mr. Ryan McMonigle are team advisors.



Cultural Connections: Solon Students Interact with Students in Ukraine

Solon Middle School students are participating in a real-time cultural connection with students in Ukraine. The Ukrainian students attend a specialized math/language/biology school with 1,600 students in Bila Tserkva on the outskirts of Kyiv. The Solon Middle School and Ukrainian students connected over Google Meet for 40 minutes before school last week and shared information about their schools and about themselves. The students found they shared many commonalities, including love of dance, sports, the arts and video games. The Solon middle school students also learned about the area of the school where the Ukrainian students must shelter nearly every day

when the air raid sirens sound. The connection is being facilitated through, URGENT, or Ukraine Relief & Giving Effort Non-Profit TogetherShip, a local organization.





CEO of Progressive Insurance Visits Chagrin Falls Middle School Students

Last spring, Chagrin Falls Middle School (CFMS) Principal Laila Discenza collaborated with students to ask for speakers that would be interesting for middle school students. Eighth grader Autumn Taylor thought of outstanding companies in the Cleveland area and decided to write to the CEO of Progressive Insurance. To Autumn's surprise, Tricia Griffith, the CEO, personally responded.

The eighth-grade team scheduled Griffith to speak to the entire middle school about leadership and effective team work. Prior to Griffith speaking to the students, they discussed the key concepts of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens (based on the book 7 Habits of Highly Effective People). Griffith touched on several concepts from the book in her speech. She encouraged students to be proactive, like Autumn was; reach out for what you want. She assured the teens that you don't always have a direct path to success. "You have to be flexible to take risks, try new things, and set daily attainable goals such as: try to make someone else's day better each day," she said. She talked about the importance of being a good listener to truly get along with others and be a good team player. She also told the students that prioritizing becomes essential for personal and professional happiness. The example she gave was that one of her sons played football his senior year of high school. His team made it to the state championship game.

Her interview with the board for the position of CEO of Progressive was scheduled for the same day. She prioritized and decided to reach out about attending the game and hope

for a reschedule of her interview. The culture that Progressive breeds is win-win thinking. Her colleague that was up for the same position gave up his interview time slot to allow her to interview and attend that championship game. She pointed out her gratitude for her colleague's kind gesture and that a title does not always determine leadership; it's how you treat others.



The mother of six children interacted incredibly well with her audience of 12-, 13-, and 14-year olds. She did not miss a beat when asked, "Do you have beef with Jake from State Farm?" She wished everyone success. "It is no mystery as to why Progressive is one of the top 20 employers in the Cleveland area and a nearly \$80 billion company," said Teacher Kathleen Aranavage. "It's only with strong leadership, positive culture, and great employees that we can reach such great success!"



Streetsboro Eighth Graders Experience Kent State's KnitLab and Fashion Program

On Friday, April 14, Kent State University's School of Fashion welcomed eighth-grade students from Streetsboro Middle School for a field trip to its KnitLab. The students participated in three different activities to gain a better understanding of fashion, design, and knitting.

The first activity took place in TechStyleLAB, where the students were introduced to CLO3D, a software used in garment design. They learned how this software can be used to create virtual clothing, test different materials, and experiment with different designs.

Next, the students moved on to a 2D to 3D exercise, where they draped different materials over objects to understand the connection between 2D shapes and 3D shapes. This helped them to see how different materials and designs can be manipulated to create unique shapes and textures.

Finally, the students were given a short overview of the industrial knitting machines in the DI Hub. They worked in pairs on the software stations to create a 2-color jacquard pattern that was knit out. This allowed them to see how their designs could be turned into physical products using modern technology.

Linda Öhrn-McDaniel, who leads the design curriculum as Professor and Industry Coordinator at Kent State's School of Fashion, was impressed with the students' enthusiasm and engagement.

She said, "It was so great to see the students in action today. They were all very engaged and enthusiastic!"

Throughout the day, the students also had the opportunity to quickly tour Rockwell Hall, the Kent State University Center for the Visual Arts Building, and Cartwright Hall. They gained valuable insight into the fashion industry and the different careers available within it.

The field trip was a great success, giving the students a chance to explore the world of fashion and design in a fun and interactive way.

The School of Fashion hopes to continue to inspire and educate young people interested in pursuing careers in this exciting field, and Streetsboro Schools plans to continue the newly established relationship with the school and Kent State and the many opportunities it might open up for students in the future.





Twinsburg High School Students Participate in Engineering Fair

Twinsburg High School sophomores Damon Hoody and Aiden Bryan are members of the Twinsburg High School MakerSpace. Together, Damon and Aiden, along with their advisor, Mrs. Jean DiMatteo, submitted an application to participate in the Cleveland State University Washkewicz College of Engineering's "BEST Medicine" Engineering Fair (BEST is an acronym for Bridging Engineering, Science, and Technology).

Their project "The Backpack-Powered Arm: Tri-Digit" was accepted into the competition on April 7th. After months of hard work, their success came to fruition with their presentation at the Fair on April 29th. Damon is the son of Tanki & Scarlet Hoody of Twinsburg and Aiden is the son of Tracy Jones of Twinsburg.

The project consisted of a 3D-printed model that utilizes an Arduino board as a microcontroller, used in tandem with an electroencephalogram (EEG) module and servo, which controls 3D-printed fingers in a piston mechanism. This allows the mechanical arm to be controlled by the end-user's brain signals.

"The servo, EEG, and Arduino microcontroller communicate with one another through the usage of the Arduino programming language, a variant of C++ and JAVA. In total, the project satisfies the price target at around \$100 USD in its usage of cheap components and a 3D-printed chassis," said student Damon Hoody.

Damon and Aiden were greatly awarded for their efforts with the "Best Mechanical Engineering Award" and the "JALEX Medical Award." Both of these awards came with cash prizes.

Two judges in particular were so impressed with these students' work, and on such a limited budget, that they reached out to Team Twinsburg after the initial judging was completed. They asked what the students needed to continue their research. Damon and Aiden answered that a 3D printer would be beneficial. After all the monetary awards were presented, one of the judges came forward and asked Program Director Dr. Brian Davis to give one final award, the first in the program's history. That award, a 3D printer, was given to Team Twinsburg to continue their work on this project.





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